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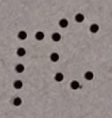
Story

of the

Fontenelles



MEUMBANE

STORY

OF THE

FONTENELLES

BY

Harriet S. MacMurphy

Illustrations by Robert F. Gilder

DEDICATED TO THE
DAUGHTERS OF THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION
OF NEBRASKA

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"LOGAN FONTENELLE'S LONG SLEEP." From Painting by R. F. Gilder.

(The graves of Logan Fontenelle and his father are beneath the trees in the right middle ground.)

Foreword.

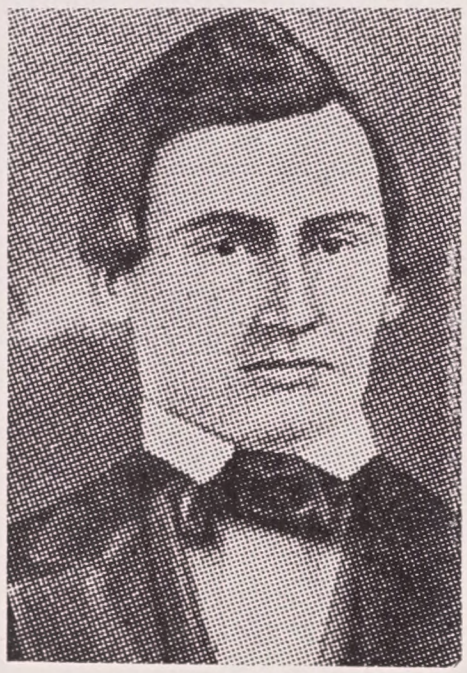
The romance of the Fontenelle family, told for the first time in the accompanying pages, was written by Mrs. Harriet S. MacMurphy from personal and first hand knowledge of the facts and after a careful study of material concerning the early history of the settlement of Nebraska. The method employed by the author of weaving a fascinating narrative from historic data has resulted in this history of the Fontenelles and the charm and appreciation of the author's presentation to the public of the dominating incidents in the lives of the members of this family stamps her work as a western classic.

The late J. Sterling Morton, who had read a portion of the story when the author first conceived the idea of an historical sketch of the Fontenelle family, declared it was worthy a place among the best literary efforts of American writers.

Mrs. MacMurphy was intimately acquainted with Henry Fontenelle, a brother of Logan, for whom the million dollar Fontenelle hotel was named, and received from him many of the facts herein narrated.

The story here told reads like, and in fact is, a romance of real life. It will give Nebraskans their first historical knowledge of the Fontenelles.

ROBERT F. GILDER.



LOGAN FONTENELLE

Head Chief of the Omaha

Story of the Fontenelles.

Harriet S. MacMurphy.

"My brother and his family all swept away by the flood. Mon Dieu, it cannot be!" and the speaker, a tall elegant woman of French birth, stopped in her excitement in front of the dark sailor who had hastened from the ship in his rough seaman's suit to tell her the sad story.

"I wonder not, madame, that you should say thus," as he rose in sympathetic response to her agitation, "but could you have been aboard the St. Ange in the storm you might better realize it. We were fortunate to reach harbor at Pointe a la Hache just before the storm burst, and to escape destruction thus, although the boat was much damaged. When, after three or four days spent in repair and in waiting for the storm to subside, we started for New Orleans, the sights we beheld everywhere were terrible. Scarcely a building left standing between here and the Pointe. Where had been plantations with their pleasant mansions and fields of cotton and cane, now were only dreary wastes that had been swept by the river. The debris was floating down and we passed many dead animals, ruins of houses, and even human bodies. It was a sight to make one weep. I hope I may not live to see it a second time."

Madame Mercier shuddered as she heard the words which pictured the sad desolation made by the hurricane and flood that had a few days before swept down the river, and which had fallen upon the Pointe just below with its intensest fury.

About the beginning of the last century, Francois Fontenelle and his wife, Marie Louise, emigrated from Marseilles, France, to Louisiana, a sister, Madame Mercier, accompanying them. She settled in New Orleans and Francois upon a plantation at Pointe a la Hache, some distance below. Here several children were born to them; the two older ones, Lucien and Amelie, when old enough to be educated, were sent to their aunt at New Orleans, and were thus saved the fate which had just befallen the rest of their family.

"I thank you, kind sir, for your goodness in coming immediately to me and relieving my suspense. I had feared to hear the truth ever since the terrible storm, but this is worse than my direst fears. My brother was so happy in his lovely home. I cannot think of him and his beautiful wife swept away in the merciless waters, their bodies never to have a resting place in hallowed ground, their souls going unshriven to the other world. Deprived in the hour of death even of the comforts and blessings of their religion. How can I tell Lucien and Amelie that they have no parents, no brothers and sisters, no home."

She did not notice in her distress that the boy and girl had entered in time to hear her, and thus the story she dreaded to tell had come to them without warning and in its fullest horror.

A minute they stood as if stunned, and then Amelie threw herself upon her aunt:

"My father and mother drowned in the terrible waters! Oh, Aunt Helene, it cannot be! Let us go and find them, I know they are not dead," and the child sobbed and trembled, while her brother, whose face had grown strained and white, said nothing, but threw himself face downward upon the divan, his body quivering with emotion.

As if drawn by the sounds of weeping a colored woman hastily entered:

"Oh, madame, what is the matter with my poah dears? And you, too, weep! Is it something that has happened to my good massa Francois?"

Lucien rose and came to her side, gasping, "Oh, Sophie, the terrible river has carried away papa and mama and all! Your Tom has gone too, and little Joe and Susette."

The poor creature gathered him in her arms as he told the news which made her, too, desolate, and mingled her tears with theirs. Husband and children, a kind master and mistress all gone!

Nurse and foster mother to these children she had always been, from henceforth she gave herself to them even more devotedly than before, and the love of the poor old colored woman was fain to supply that of father and mother, for their just but severe aunt cared for and faithfully educated them, but showed few outward tokens of love, and only the memory remained to them of the beautiful old verandaed home under the great live oaks where they had spent a happy childhood, their mother like some saint smiling sweetly upon them out of her beautiful brown eyes, and their father on his great prancing horse swinging Amelie to the saddle in front of him for a canter down the tree-lined avenue.

At the age of sixteen Lucien was placed as clerk in a banking house. Some boyish indiscretion was reported to his aunt by his employers and a stormy scene ensued between them. The stately and proud dame, allied by birth to the nobility of the French empire, brooked no word of disrespect from child or servant, and in return for some hasty word she dealt the youth a blow on the cheek.

"You will never have the opportunity to do it again," he said, and left her presence.

That night he stood by the gate which led from the rear entrance of his aunt's home, beside him the ever faithful Sophie.

"Don't go, honey, you know your aunt was angry and didn't know what she was doing. Stay and tend to youah work faithful in the bank. You will soon be a man and youah own mahster. Don't go away from your old nurse and Amelie, Lucien."

"It is too late, Sophie, to talk of staying now. If Aunt Mercier thinks as she says she does she will soon deprive me of my place in the bank, and I would better go before that happens. There is a great chance, Sophie, for a young man in the new St. Louis country, and I am going there. I know Pierre Chouteau and he will help me. I shall go up the great river and see new lands, and hunt wild animals among the warlike Indians of the plains. Some day I'll come back to you and Amelie, Sophie, and tell you wilder stories than any you have ever heard," and the boy's eyes glowed like stars in the moonlight.

"I wish I could keep you, honey, but you'se done got the fever which takes all the brave ones into the dreadful wild new country where the Indians or the wild animals may kill you." And poor, faithful Sophie twined her arms round the boy in a last loving caress such as only she had given him since the waters carried his mother away.

And then, with his bundle of clothing under his arm the lad disappeared from the sight of his black foster-mother, and for twenty years was dead to all who had known him.

Amelie, perhaps less high spirited than her brother, perhaps less liable to acts which should irritate her stately aunt, remained with her, and growing into a beautiful young woman, became the wife of an eminent lawyer of New Orleans, and a family of daughters grew up around her, to whom the faithful Sophie was nurse and companion as she had been to Lucien and Amelie. But she never ceased to watch for the return of young Marse Lucien, although her hopes grew fainter as the years lengthened in number.

"A gentleman wishes to see you, madame, but he would not give his name," said Mrs. Lockett's servant one morning in the year 1836.

Mrs. Lockett descended to the parlor; as she entered a man arose and came toward her. He was an Indian apparently; but almost before she had time to wonder at the strange appearance of such a being in her drawing rooms, she was startled almost beyond control by a hearty embrace from him with the words, "Are you not glad to see your brother, Amelie?"

She thrust him from her in consternation and anger. Her brother! The swarthy cheek, the long black locks, the strange costume! And she thought of the slender, pale-faced boy who had gone away from her.

"You don't know me, Amelie? Can't you see a look like your brother? I know I must be very different, but I am Lucien."

"How can it be," she said. "Lucien was fair, and with brown hair. You are so dark. Lucien was slight; you are so broad shouldered and large," and she looked with distrust upon the strange being who assorted so illy with her beautiful surroundings. She had looked for her brother to return some time, and at first had dreamed many a dream of his home-coming, but never so.

"Where is Sophie?" he said at length, disappointed at her distrust and lack of response to his greeting of his only relative. "She will know me."

Sophie came wonderingly in response to the summons, and looked yet more wonderingly at what she took for an Indian, toward which people she had all the antipathy of her race.

"I know no Indian," was her brief response to his greeting.

"Indian. Why, I am no Indian, Sophie! Have you, too, forgotten the boy you promised to remember, and pray for? I am Lucien, Sophie."

"Lucien! my boy, Lucien? How can it be? He was—not like you."

"Twenty years in the wilderness would change a boy some, Sophie. You surely remember the night you bade me good bye at Aunt Mercier's gate, and begged me not to go?"

"I've nevah forgot Lucien, and I've prayed many, many times for his return, honey, but I'm just trying to see the Lucien I remember in this dark man who I shouahly thought was an Indian."

"Can't you remember some mark about me, Sophie," said he, half in jest. "Runaways always have some birth-mark, don't they?"

"Certin suah, and if you are Lucien Fontenelle you will have a long scar on your right ankle where little Black Ben cut you with the knife which you and he stole from ole Dinah's kitchen to dig out the 'possum in the live oak tree. I bound it up and nursed you 'till you was well."

"You're right, Sophie, and here's your scar," said the now happy man, baring his foot and revealing thereby the delicate ankle and white skin which had been so effectually darkened on face, neck and hands. "And what a time you had keeping father from punishing us both by dire stories of the terrible wound and its consequent pain and the fright which nearly turned Bob into a white nigger."

"It must be Lucien," said Sophie, half delightedly, and half ruefully, for the dark, long-haired man was not the Lucien she had so often pictured coming home to them.

Amelie, too, was convinced of his identity, as he told tale after tale of their childhood days, and the old courtly manner and grace reappeared as he talked, but his incongruity in dress and appearance with her surroundings was a jarring note in the song of joy that should have been sung over the wanderer returned.

It was a strange tale he told them. He had made his way to St. Louis and there had found a party just starting up the Missouri river to trade with the Indians, which he joined. His desire for the wild life of the prairie had thus full and immediate gratification, and apparently, like many more of his race, he did not tire of it, for he went back again and again, established trading posts, gradually became himself one of the prairie people, and a ruler over them. He did, indeed, as he had promised Sophie, tell them tales the like of which they had never dreamed before. He had gone up the great rivers to their source, had crossed the mountains and viewed the waters of the Pacific ocean. He had gone northward to Hudson's bay. He told them of strange tribes of Indians, the Ayeoways, the Ottoes, the Pawnees, the 'Mahas, and of their great hunts which they had for game, herds of buffalo

covering miles of prairie, great animals larger than the largest ox, with shaggy hides and tremendous shoulders and heads. He talked for them in the strange Indian tongue, and although they could detect no difference he assured them he could be understood by fifteen different tribes.

It seemed to Amelie and her family like reading some strange tale of adventure, and ever there was that consciousnss of incongruity, their habits, those of society, charming, elegant, conventional, savoring of the **ancien regime,** whose memory had always been preserved by Madame Mercier; his, those of the wild man, robust, unconventional, savoring of power but the power of the strong race over the weak, not the acuteness of the weapons of civilized life—and yet, there were strange glimpses of the early training which had been the same as hers, the courtliness and grace of the Frenchman were there despite the acquired roughnesses of the frontiersman.

"Have you never married, Lucien?" she asked, "you talk ever of adventure and romance, never of home life."

A strange look was for a time his only answer. At last he said, "I thought once to marry a daughter of the Chouteaus and settle in St. Louis, but my love of travel was great and while I wandered to the western shores, to the great Pacific, she was won by another, and when I returned she was lost to me. But Amelie, at my trading post at Bellevue, on the Missouri, there is a family, four boys and a girl, and they are mine. Their mother is named Meumbane, which means 'The Sun,' and she is a daughter of the 'Mahas."

"An Indian, Lucien, you married to an Indian," and Amelie burst into tears.

He looked bored. Did not every trader and hunter who lived among the Indians take one of them to wife, sometimes two or three! To be sure he had been foolish enough to make Meumbane really his wife, having been married by Father De Smet, why, he hardly knew himself. But he thought with pride of his handsome boys living under the great oaks and elms of the steep bluffs where one beheld the "Beautiful View," and of his and their dominion over the red warriors who hunted the buffalo and the bear, the elk and the antelope.

But Amelie thought only of the dreadful fate which had befallen the Fontenelles!

He stayed but a few weeks, and then, to the relief of all, perhaps, as well as his own, left New Orleans, promising, however, to return again.

Only Sophie grieved at his departure, and treasured in her memory the wondrous stories he had told.

A few months later Mrs. Lockett's servant announced "a priest wishes to see you, madame, he gave his name as Father De Smet."

Mrs. Lockett knew no priest by that name, but presuming it was some traveling monk who solicited alms went down to meet him.

"I address the sister, I believe, of Lucien Fontenelle?" he said, as he rose at her greeting.

"Yes, sir, do you bring me news of him?"

"I do, madame, sad news. I come but recently from the death bed of your brother. Returning from his visit to you, he was attacked with cholera, which was raging along the great rivers, and I stood beside him and administered the last sacred rites of Holy Mother church to him. His dying request was that I come to you and beg of you to assume the care of his only daughter, Susan. He has money sufficient to educate his children as a Fontenelle should be educated. I have made arrangements to continue the boys, Logan and Tecumseh, in school at St. Louis where they had already been sent by their father; Henry and Albert are too young to go yet."

While shocked at this sudden and untimely death of her brother, Mrs. Lockett was almost more shocked at the request that she take this wild Indian girl to her home, among her beautiful daughters. Pictures of the strange, dark creature among the dainty, well-bred maidens of the proud, old French city photographed themselves on her consciousness, and her spirits sank.

"I could not do for her; it would be impossible. She would be entirely unfitted for our life and surroundings. It would make her most miserable," she faltered, torn by conflicting emotions, her thought of her family, her fear of the story of dreadful mesalliance which would follow the advent of the girl.

"You understand, madame," said the priest, "that if you do not care for the young girl there is no alternative but for her to remain with her Indian mother and grow up an Indian. I may be able to send her to a convent for a few years, but when she is through there she will have to return to her mother and her tribe."

"My brother should have thought of these chances before he took upon himself such responsibilities," she responded, with hauteur.

"He counted upon the ordinary term of life, and the opportunity to direct and care for his children's education and after career. He had begun with Logan and Tecumseh, and fine boys they are, fully capable of profiting by their opportunity. Logan has special ability, and great courage and bravery. The Fontenelle family is known in the great river region, and had your brother lived would have continued a power among the Indian tribes of the Missouri. His sons may yet carry his name to eminence. But a woman in an Indian tribe has but little opportunity. She is subject to the braves. Only through your help can the blood of the Fontenelles in Susan be redeemed from slavery and dominion."

"It is impossible for me to do what you ask, Father, even were I personally equal to it. Those among whom my lot is cast would repudiate and spurn her; she would be condemned,, made miserable, and we through her. The money is no object to me, good father, take it and do what you can for the unfortunate children, but do not ask of me an impossibility."

"Inasmuch as ye did it unto the least of these my brethren ye did it unto me." Did she hear this as a faint breath from the lips of Father de Smet, or did her own inner soul breathe it to the outer ear of sense as a faint protest against the crust which society had made over it? And the look which the father gave her as he spoke the words of churchly parting re-

mained to stir often the slumbering conscience of the woman who had repudiated her kindred at the dictates of the society which would make the outside fair, no matter that the inside be full of misdoing; she remembered it as seldom as she could, but always with a shiver.

And the husky sons and daughter of Lucien Fontenelle grew up among the oak-crowned bluffs of Bellevue, in the land of the flat water, or upon the broad and beautiful prairies of the reservation, and the patrician daughters of Amelie Fontenelle passed the days which saw them grow to womanhood in the beautiful old city of New Orleans, reared in every conventionality of that most conventional of peoples, the French creoles.

Neither family of children knew more than the bare fact of the existence of the other, for Madame Lockett spoke to her children nothing of their strange cousins of the red people, and Lucien Fontenelle had told his Indian wife but little of his relatives in the south land. Only Sophie, faithful to the memory of her dear Marse Lucien, sometimes to the youngest daughter of the family, who more than the rest loved to hear her tales, told the story of her uncle who had hunted the buffalo and the antelope out on the great wide mysterious plains where the Indians roamed, and who had crossed the great Rocky mountains to the ocean where the sun went down.

Logan Fontenelle became the last great chief of his tribe, the "Mahas," as they of the tribe pronounce it, with a full breath before the first syllable, and which the white man in vain attempt to imitate, pronounces with an initial O. This name they have now given to a city built upon the lands once the possession of the tribe, which city is known all over the world, but the tribe scarcely beyond the confines of its reservation.

They fought with the Sioux always, and after many battles the brave chief Logan, for whose scalp they had hunted many a day, was slain; thirty arrows in his breast, one in his forehead, and one in each cheek; but his braves rescued his body, carried it to his home and buried it with days and nights of Indian mourning, singing the death song and burning the fires, on a point of the bluff overlooking the great river which flowed ever swiftly by, and near the first trading post of his father. The white man came later, and the lands of the 'Mahas' passed to them, and now the graves of the last chief and his father, side by side, are overgrown with trees that keep the secret of the spot, and whisper it only in their leaf language which man cannot understand. Tecumseh, too, was slain in a family feud and neither left a son to bear the name. Susan, whom Madame Lockett left to grow up among her kindred of the Indians, married a French half-breed, and died in her home near the site of her father's last abode.

Henry Fontenelle alone remained to perpetuate the name. He followed the fortunes of his tribe to their reservation, married and reared a family of children. Always one of the chief men of the tribe he accompanied a band of them as interpreter on a visit to their Great Father at Washington, stopping at Chicago a few days on the way.

The young daughter of Amelie Fontenelle, she who had listened to Sophie's stories of her uncle, the wanderer, had married and lived in Chicago. At the breakfast table one morning she read in the papers of this band of Indians on their journey to Washington, and saw the name of Fontenelle.

"I believe that is my cousin," she said to her husband, reading him the article. "You know mother was a Fontenelle, and our old nurse, Sophie, has often told me about Uncle Lucien who went off to the St. Louis country, as she always called it, and was not heard of for twenty years, when he came back looking like an Indian and told them he had a family of Indian children at a place way up the Missouri river called Bellevue. It is in Nebraska, I believe. He went back and died of cholera, and we have never heard of them since, except that Sophie once told me below her breath that a priest came to mother and wanted her to take care of a daughter, which mother very properly refused to do. Just imagine us taking or attempting to take an Indian girl into the society of New Orleans! It might do here in cosmopolitan Chicago, where indeed it has been tried, but that old southern aristocracy would have utterly refused ever to acknowledge the existence of a family with such a disgraceful member. But I have spent hours wondering what that girl would be like and still have such a desire to know more about them I believe I will go and see this man. The papers say he is a French half-breed and well educated. If a son of my uncle's we know the first half is true and can, therefore, be more inclined to believe the other, although where he got his education is a puzzle."

"Suit yourself, my dear, you may find yourself allied to a whole tribe of red men, and have the opportunity to educate any number of dusky maidens," was her husband's somewhat amused response.

"I believe I'll run the chance, anyway. They live more than five hundred miles away. What do you suppose he will look like? I'm consumed with curiosity."

And she went and found a quiet man with a gentle voice, the dignity of his red ancestry joined to the suavity and courtliness of the sire who gave it to him with the French blood that had flowed in the veins of a marquis. He looked like an Indian; he acted like a white man and wore a white man's dress. He had a dim tradition that somewhere in the south his father had left a sister, and he listened to the story of his relatives and told of his own family with quiet ease. He dined with her in her handsome home, and then traveled on with his red brethren and told their story to the "Great Father."

And she wrote to her sisters who still dwelt in the southern land where Mme. Mercier and Mme. Lockett had lived to see the rebellion sweep away their fortunes and leave them only the traditions of their former power. One sister had married a Frenchman named De Milt, who seemed to have been also fond of roaming and adventure and who had bequeathed this spirit to a son who was about fourteen when his aunt wrote of meeting the strange Indian cousin, who was traveling with his red brethren to visit the Great Father. His imagination was fired. He had never before heard that they

had such relations, and what to his mother was a mortification was to him pure delight. Some cousins that were half Indians! Who lived out on the great wide prairies and hunted buffalo and roamed the mountains beyond! Oh, it was glorious! He would hunt them!

One day, like his Uncle Lucien, he was gone, and a few weeks later a youth with slender, oval, olive-skinned face and gray eyes appeared at Henry Fontenelle's door and said, "You are my Indian cousin. My mother was the daughter of Amelie Fontenelle; they wrote to us about you and I have come to see you."

Henry took him by the hand and made him one of the family, and for years the boy went up and down among the Indians. At last he came back to Henry Fontenelle's and married his pretty cousin, Emma, Henry's daughter, who had inherited the grace and brightness of both her French and Indian ancestry.

As little did Lucien imagine such a union for the descendants of his Indian sons as Amelie for her patrician daughters.

Upon the edge of the Omaha reservation, beside the great river up whose broad pathway the white man trod to the land of the red man, stands the home of Henry Fontenelle, his children and grandchildren. The inseparable companions of his declining days were little Cecil and Henri, his namesake.

Perched upon an old stump overlooking the river, where they had stopped to rest one day after a long tramp, Henri asked "Where does all the water in the river go to, grandpa?"

His grandpa did not answer him at once. He was thinking of its course down, down past the city which bore the name of his tribe, past the older town, now but a hamlet, where his father and mother were lying on the elm-crowned bluffs, still on down, down past the old Shawnee mission where he had learned in the white man's school, and yet on to the city founded by the Frenchmen, his father's countrymen, whither his father had fled in his youth; then, mingling with the waters of the great Mississippi, flowing yet onward until it reached the other city of the Frenchmen, New Orleans, and the home of the first Fontenelle, his grandfather, who had perished in these waters almost a century ago.

How could he make the little Henri see all these pictures which passed before his mental sight in response to that question?

He thought with a sigh of the effort he had but lately made to find the graves of his parents and brothers, and wished that he might place some fitting monument over them. A statue of an Indian brave upon his hardy hunting pony, with bow and arrow in hand, in memory of the last chief of the tribe which had given its name to the principal city of the plains over which they had so recently hunted the buffalo. The whispering trees and the murmuring river would tell the tale to ears attuned to their cadence, and thus the soldier from the fort just beyond the bluffs, and the student from the college on the heights might understand something of the strange, wild, free

life of the days when the Indian and the buffalo were monarchs of the plains.

And then he told little Henri how his great-grandfather had come up the river many years ago, built the trading post on its banks and named the place "the beautiful view"; the place where he now lay buried; how his great, great-grandfather had been drowned in those waters a long time before that, when his great-grandfather was a little boy like him, way down very far from there, where the river flowed into the sea, and how, far up to the north, his great uncle had been slain by the arrows of the Sioux; the uncle who was the last chief of the Omahas, when they were like old A-lub-e-che-sah there.

And old A-lub-e-che-sah, one of the few "blanket Indians," hobbled across their path and down to the river side and the tepee, which was half hidden in the willows that grew there. His blanket dropped from his shoulders, and his naked and yet muscular limbs looked like polished mahogany in the bright sunlight.

Little Henri, who would never quite know what it meant to be a "blanket Indian" and fight the Sioux, looked down the river and over towards the tepee for awhile and then, leaning more closely against his grandfather said, "Tell me more about Uncle Logan, grandpa, and how he fought the Sioux and they killed him."

"Uncle Logan never lived here, Henri, only came here sometimes to hunt and to drive back the Sioux who killed his people. He had a home way down the river on a bluff among the trees looking down on the trading post at the foot of the bluffs and close by the bank of the river, where his father had sold blankets and tabac and beads to the Omahas and the Ayeoways and the Pawnees in return for great bales of beaver and mink and otter skins. Where the great boats that came up the river after these furs landed and brought him more things that the Indians wanted, stroud cloth and blankets and too often, alas, the white man's "firewater" that made them bad. They would have great feasts on the boats and give gifts and then go on up the river for more furs.

"Back of Uncle Logan's house the hills rose higher yet and made a shelter from the winds. On the great semicircle round the house the grass grew to the hill in the rear and the wild flowers and the gooseberries and the raspberries and the grape vines growing up the trees made it beautiful."

"Where did you live, grandpa?"

"I was a young man, like your papa, and sometimes your Aunt Susan and I lived with your Uncle Logan, sometimes I stayed in the trading post and sometimes with Aunt Susan after she married Uncle Neil, until I married your grandmother and had a home of my own.

"Uncle Logan built a house with a foundation of the stone that we dug from the bluffs across the Platte and walnut lumber sawed from the trees growing along the river. The boats brought him furniture and carpets and the things that white men used in their houses so that he could teach the Indians to use them and build themselves better houses and learn the ways that would help them to do more with the beautiful country that was theirs.

Uncle Logan and Uncle Tecumseh had been down to the good Jesuit Fathers' school to be educated, to learn how to make and use the better things of the white men, to whose race they half belonged; down the river still further to the great city of the white man, St. Louis.

"Uncle Logan formed great plans to help his Indian people that he loved, his mother's people and his, to make that which her name typified, Meumbane, 'the sun,' rise upon them, the sun of civilization, as the Christian fathers had taught him. He had lived among these, his Indian kindred, most of his days except when he went to his father's race to learn their ways.

"The Sioux Indians, who lived up in the north country, hated the Omahas and the Pawnees and the Ayeoways and often stole down the river and carried off their ponies and killed and scalped the Indians they hated.

"One day Uncle Logan and some of his band went out west from Bellevue on the great prairies, hunting. They had started home with their game loaded on the tent poles strapped to the sides of their ponies. Uncle Logan stopped in a low place where gooseberries and raspberries and grapes grew by the side of the creek to pick some of the fruit. The others went on, and when they were out of sight some Sioux sprang from a dense thicket shooting at him with their bows. He fired his white man's gun at them, but they closed round him and fighting to the last, his body soon full of arrows, he sank to the ground and died. They scalped him, sprang to their ponies and fled. When he did not rejoin the band Two Crows went back to hunt him and finding his body lying on the ground turned his pony and fled back to the band. It took them many days to get his body, wrap it in skins, and bring it to Bellevue and the home on the side of the bluff, about a hundred miles east. Scouts surrounded the band and the ponies drawing the poles on which the body lay to give the alarm should the Sioux come down upon them. The swiftest rider carried the word to the tribe, all of which went out to meet them, wailing and weeping and cutting their flesh with the sharp stone implements they used before the white men brought them knives and rifles. A grave was dug beside our father's, a little way from Uncle Logan's house, and there a group of white people stood. One of them, Commodore Decatur, read the burial service for the dead that the white people used.

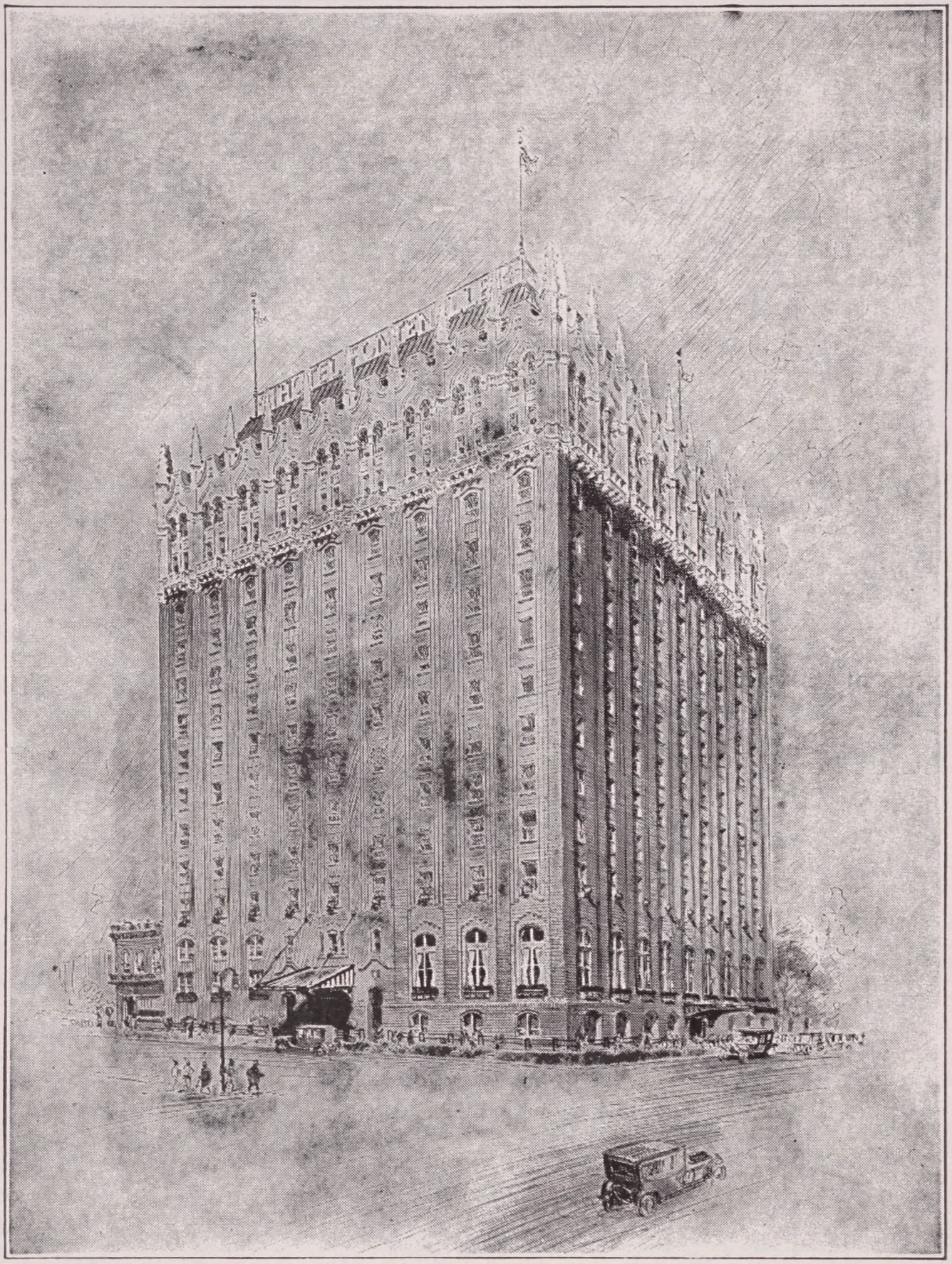
"And down there on the side of the bluffs are the graves of your great grandfather and your Uncle Logan side by side, while a little way further up the hill lays your great grandmother and your Uncle Albert.

"After awhile we all left Bellevue except Aunt Susan, and came up here to live. Now only Aunt Susan and I are living to tell you of the times when your Uncle Logan was chief of the Omahas and we saw the white people coming up the river in the great steamboats to our land, the great prairie land that stretched from the river to the mountains and over which roamed the great herds of buffalo and antelope and deer that every spring and fall we went to hunt."

He was silent, his eyes still beholding these visions of the past in the flowing waters silvered by the setting sun.

The buffalo were all gone, and the deer and the antelope, grandpa said, and thus to little Henri, fourth generation of the Fontenelles in America, came the consciousness as a child might have it, that the Indian's time had passed, gone with the buffalo and the deer and the antelope.

And he, of the fourth generation, must be a white man and do the things his Uncle Logan, chief of the Omahas, wished to do for his people.



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